

Latin American Reaction to US-Cuban Break

Latin American reaction to the US-Cuban diplomatic break thus far has been mixed and fragmentary. The most striking comment has come from Mexican Foreign Minister Tello, who told American Embassy officials that the exertion of any influence to bring Cuba back into the American family of nations would be most difficult since Cuba's recent actions demonstrate its complete alignment with the Sino-Soviet bloc. He said that while the Cuban situation is a problem for the Cubans themselves, they will need "a bit of outside help" in some form which would not "lower the prestige of any nation." He said that the Cuban problem could only be dealt with by the Organization of American States (OAS) through the provisions of the Caracas resolution of 1954 against international Communism, but he added that this would preclude any Mexican involvement in the voting. Mexico remains the only Latin American nation which has not endorsed the 1954 resolution.

The US Embassy in Mexico City sees this statement as an indication that Mexico may "convey a benevolent nod for someone else to terminate the Cuban headache while Mexico goes on abstaining." Mexico has long been a staunch supporter of the doctrine of nonintervention, and the Tello statement is the furthest any Mexican official has yet gone in condoning external action to solve the Cuban problem. Some Mexican officials have publicly voiced their sympathy for the Cuban people and the aims of their revolution since June 1960, when Cuban President Osvaldo Dorticos was received warmly by Mexican officials as well as the general public during his tour of the country. This attitude has been due both to Mexico's finding an analogy between the Cuban and Mexican revolutions² and to mounting leftist pressures on the Lopez Mateos government.

A Brazilian Foreign Office official criticized the US for not consulting the other OAS governments beforehand, and

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expressed fears that the break will play into Castro's hands in his efforts to drive a wedge between the United States and the rest of Latin America. Venezuelan Foreign Minister Falcon Briceño commented favorably on the US action and said that he considered it inevitable; Haitian Foreign Minister Baguidy expressed a similar sentiment. Venezuelan relations with Cuba are already strained, and Ambassador Sparks in Caracas feels that Venezuela's future course in regard to Cuba will be determined by the degree of satisfaction of the Betancourt government with the outcome of the 4 January OAS council meeting, which voted to impose limited economic sanctions against the Trujillo dictatorship in the Dominican Republic. Costa Rican and Panamanian officials have indicated that their governments now are considering the possibility of breaking diplomatic ties with Cuba.

Uruguayan officials have indicated their government may use the Cuban precedent in demanding the reduction of the US diplomatic mission in Havana to the same level as the Cuban representation in Washington as a means of trimming the size of the Soviet diplomatic mission of some 30 individuals in Montevideo to the three Uruguayans in Moscow.

Meanwhile, there is no evidence of a Cuban move against the US naval base at Guantanamo, but the Cuban ambassador to Mexico said on 3 January that his government would present a "petition" to the United Nations "to have the base eliminated."

Also, [REDACTED] since 31 December [REDACTED] close Cuban surveillance of the base, [REDACTED]

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